

Message Text

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47

ACTION NEA-10

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SUBJECT: NEW YARG APPOINTMENTS: MAKKI TO SANA U. AND NEW
GOVERNOR FOR TAIZ

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: IN ANNOUNCEMENT MADE DEC 28, COMMAND
COUNCIL ANNOUNCED THE REPLACEMENT OF TAIZ GOVERNOR ABD
AL-RAHMAN MUHAMAD ALI UTHMAN BY ABD AL-SALAM AL-HADDAD
(CURRENTLY GOVERNOR OF SANA PROVINCE), WHILE ON DEC
29 HASAN MAKKI APPOINTED AS FIRST YEMENI HEAD OF SANA
UNIVERSITY. END SUMMARY.

2. NEW GOVERNOR FOR TAIZ. ABD AL-RAHMAN MUHAMAD ALI
UTHMAN HAS BEEN GOVERNOR OF TAIZ SINCE JUNE 1973. A
HAPHAZARD ADMINISTRATOR, UTHMAN ACCUSED OF BEGINNING
SEVERAL EXPENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS WITHOUT MAKING
ADEQUATE PROVISION FOR FINANCING THEIR COMPLETION
(PARTICULARLY IN ROAD CONSTRUCTION). WELL-FOUNDED CHARGES
OF CORRUPTION WERE ALSO COMMON DURING HIS LAST YEAR IN
OFFICE; ESPECIALLY WITH REGARD TO CRS PL-480 WHEAT DIS-
TRIBUTIONS IN THE GOVERNORATE. A PROTEGE OF MINSTATE
AHMED ABDU SAID, UTHMAN WAS OPPOSED BY MANY OF SAID'S
NUMEROUS AND VOCAL TAIZ OPPONENTS, AND HIS REMOVAL
VIEWED BY MANY HERE AS INDICATING THAT MINSTATE SAID
MAY HIMSELF HAVE HIS TETHER SHORTENED.

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3. NEW TAIZ GOVERNOR IS ABD AL-SALEM AL-HADAD WHO, UP UNTIL THIS APPOINTMENT, WAS HEAD OF SANA GOVERNORATE. IN CONTRAST TO UTHMAN, HADAD HAS REPUTATION FOR SCRUPULOUS HONESTY, ALTHOUGH HE IS NOT EXPECTED TO BE ESPECIALLY ACTIVE GOVERNOR. BEFORE BECOMING GOVERNOR IN 1974, HADAD WAS GENERAL MANAGER OF GOVERNMENT-RUN YEMEN FOREIGN TRADE COMPANY- ONE OF THE MORE INEFFICIENT IMPORT HOUSES IN YAR. A NATIVE OF IBB, HADAD IS ACCEPTABLE BUT NOT UNANIMOUSLY POPULAR CHOICE TO SUCCEED UTHMAN. ALTHOUGH HE IS NEITHER FAVORED LOCAL SON NOR MAN OF PRONOUNCED DYNAMISM, HADAD'S SUCCESS OR NON-SUCCESS AS TAIZ GOVERNOR WILL NOT BE DETERMINED BY THESE FACTORS BUT, MORE PROBABLY, BY THE AMOUNT OF COOPERATION HE CAN SECURE FROM THE LOCAL MILITARY GOVERNOR, LTC ALI SALIH, AND TAIZ SECURITY CHIEF, MAJOR ABDALLAH SALIH.

4. BEGIN COMMENT: ALTHOUGH OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW TAIZ GOVERNOR INDICATED APPOINTMENT TAKEN IN CONSULTATION WITH CABINET AND COMMAND COUNCIL, DECISION CAME UNEXPECTEDLY AND CAUGHT MOST MINISTERS (INCLUDING FOMIN ABDALLAH AL-ASNAJ) BY SURPRISE. CHANGE APPARENTLY PREDICATED BY HAMDI DESIRE TO REPLACE KNOWN CORRUPT OFFICIAL WITH FIGURE OF BETTER HONESTY CREDENTIALS. WIDER POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS AND EFFECTS DECISION WILL HAVE ON POSITION MINSTATE SAID PRESENTLY UNKNOWN. END COMMENT.

5. MAKKI TO SANA U. FORMER YARG AMBASSADOR TO WASHINGTON, HASAN MAKKI, APPOINTED HEAD OF SANA U. DEC 29. MAKKI IS FIRST YEMENI TO HOLD POSITION. SINCE KUWAIT-FINANCED UNIVERSITY BEGAN FUNCTIONING 1972, PRESIDENT HAS BEEN EGYPTIAN BROUGHT FROM KUWAIT UNIVERSITY AND CHANGED ON YEARLY BASIS. ALTHOUGH APPOINTMENT NOT EXPECTED TO HAVE MUCH IMMEDIATE EFFECT OF CURBING THE OFTEN SLIP-SHOD AND SUBSTANDARD TEACHING PERFORMANCE OF LARGELY EGYPTIAN STAFF, IT IS VIEWED AS IMPORTANT STEP TO INCREASED YEMENI PARTICIPATION IN THE UNIVERSITY'S FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATION.

. BEGIN COMMENT: POSSIBILITY OF MAKKI APPOINTMENT FIRST LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RAISED IN AUGUST (SANA 2386) BUT THERE WERE LATER INDICATIONS THAT HIS INSUBORDINATE PERFORMANCE AT THE UN THIS FALL HAD CAUSED HAMDI TO BLOCK HIS NOMINATION. MOVE SHOULD, HOWEVER, MAKE IT EASIER FOR HAMDI TO HANDLE MAKKI WHO WILL FIND IT MORE DIFFICULT--AS A WOULD BE LEFTIST CRITIC--TO OPENLY CRITICIZE THE PRESIDENT WHO, SINCE HIS RETURN FROM SAUDI ARABIA EARLIER THIS MONTH, HAS ONCE AGAIN BEEN GATHERING

POLITICAL STRENGTH. END COMMENT.
SCOTES

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